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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Austria (Russian Zone)

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at Sollenau, Austria

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1. General

The whole area around Sollenau, from the power factory in the north southwards to the Wiener-Neustadt/Ebenfurth railway, and from the Trieste Bundesstrasse eastwards to the east boundary of the former artillery range, is out of bounds to all civilians. All roads and tracks inside this area are patrolled by Russian troops who shoot on sight. No non-Russian has entered the installations since the Russians took over.

2. Grosses Mittel

Power and ammunition are stored in magazines, consisting of underground bunkers surrounded by earth walls 4 meters high. There is no powder factory in this complex. Until December 1947, powerful explosions were frequently heard in the area between Grosses Mittel and the powder factory; these have now greatly diminished (three or four in February). The magazines were damaged in the war, but have been rebuilt by the Russians; the old barracks have been repaired and enlarged. Ammunition arrives by rail, but motor convoys have also been observed in the area.

3. Powder Factory

Work is carried out in the powder factory but details are not known.

4. Laboratory (immediately east of the canal on the road to the powder factory)

This was partly destroyed during the war but has been completely repaired by the Russians. Details of work in progress are not known.

5. Tritol Works

Source was told by a former employee that, before the war, shells were not manufactured in the factory but only brought there to be filled with high explosives. As the Russians have not installed any new machinery, it is assumed that shells are only filled there now. The

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factory is surrounded by a wire fence 3 meters high; along the fence are newly-dug holes, each 150 cm deep, at intervals of 20 m. The actual plant, consisting of brick sheds, appears to be in good order. Six wooden barracks in the southwest corner are partly destroyed and have no windows. Five wooden barracks in the northwest appear to be newly-built. A store room near the south boundary is damaged and appears unused. In the southeast corner is an underground bunker surrounded by a high earth wall; from this, a broad trench leads to the center of the factory. Two guard huts with armed sentries are situated along the west side of the fence. Russian soldiers in overalls were seen carrying shells from the interior of the factory along the trench to the underground bunker; each soldier carried one shell about 60 - 70 cm long. On the ground lay an artillery shell about 80 cm long, caliber estimated at 20 cm, with detonator screwed on. Around the base were bore holes 1 cm in diameter.

5. Troops

All troops in the barracks camp on the road leading from Theresienfeld to the Tritol works wear blue shoulder boards. Most of the few troops in surrounding villages wear blue epauletts; some wear black. Occasionally, troops with red and green epauletts are seen, but always singly and never in groups. On 6 March 1948, two trains, each consisting of 7 cars, entered the Tritol works and were unloaded. It is estimated that 100 Russians are occupied in the works.

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